Claims

1.   (currently amended) A method of communicating with a user of a processor-based device over a network, the method comprising:

      providing a body-less electronic mail message having a subject line and lacking a message body capable of receiving message content;

      receiving a text message into the subject line of the body-less electronic mail message; and

      transmitting the body-less electronic mail message to the user over the network.

2.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the subject line of the body-less electronic mail message includes one or more other text messages taken from a subject line of a previous body-less electronic mail message.

3.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the subject line of the body-less electronic mail message includes one or more other text messages taken from a chat conversation converted into a format of a body-less electronic mail message.

4.   (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving the body-less electronic mail message over the network, displaying the body-less electronic mail message on a display screen as a line item in a mailbox view, and displaying on the display screen an entire contents of the subject line when a cursor is positioned over a subject column of the line item.

5.   (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving the body-less electronic mail message over the network, displaying the body-less electronic mail message on a display screen as a line item in a mailbox view having a column for the subject line, and displaying on the display

5   screen a scroll bar arrow at one end of the subject line column, when a

6   cursor is positioned over the subject column of the line item, for

7   horizontally scrolling through the contents of the subject line.

1   6.   (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising inserting a

2   delimiter into the subject line to separate the text message from a

3   previous text message currently included in the subject line.

1   7.   (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising converting the

2   body-less electronic mail message to an online electronic chat

3   conversation.

1   8.   (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising converting a chat

2   conversion into a body-less electronic mail message.

1   9.   (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying on a

2   user interface a chat-like graphical window for engaging in synchronous

3   chat in response to receiving the body-less electronic mail message over

4   the network.

1   10. (currently amended) A computing system, comprising:

2   a display screen;

3   an input device;

4   a network interface; and

5   a processor running an electronic mail program to present to a

6   user on the display screen a body-less electronic mail message having a

7   subject line and lacking a message body capable of receiving message

8   content, wherein the user operates the input device to enter a text

9   message into the subject line of the body-less electronic mail message,

10   and the network interface transmits the body-less electronic mail

11   message having the text message in the subject line over a network.

1   11.   (Original) The computing system of claim 10, wherein the electronic mail

2   program places in the subject line of the body-less electronic mail

3   message one or more other text messages taken from a subject line of a

4   previously received body-less electronic mail message.

1   12.   (Original) The computing system of claim 10, wherein the electronic mail

2   program displays the body-less electronic mail message on a display

3   screen as a line item in a mailbox view and displays an entire contents of

4   the subject line when a cursor is positioned over a subject column of the

5   line item.

1   13.   (Original) The computing system of claim 10, wherein the electronic mail

2   program displays the body-less electronic mail message on a display

3   screen as a line item in a mailbox view and displays a scroll bar arrow at

4   one end of the subject line column, when a cursor is positioned over the

5   subject column of the line item, for horizontally scrolling through the

6   contents of the subject line.

1   14.   (Original) The computing system of claim 10, wherein the electronic mail

2   program converts the body-less electronic mail message to an online

3   electronic chat conversation.

1   15.   (Original) The computing system of claim 10, wherein the chat program

2   converts a chat conversion into a body-less electronic mail message.

1   16.   (Original) The computing system of claim 10, wherein the network

2   interface communicates with the network over one of a wired and

3   wireless connection.

1   17.   (Original) The computing system of claim 10, wherein the computing

2   system is one of a computer, a workstation, a personal digital assistant,

3   a cellular telephone, and an online gaming platform.

1   18.   (currently amended) An apparatus for communicating with a user of a

2   processor-based device over a network, the apparatus comprising:

3   means for providing a body-less electronic mail message having a

4   header and lacking a message body capable of receiving message

5   content;

6   means for recording a temporal sequence of one or more text

7   messages into the header of the body-less electronic mail message; and

8   means for transmitting the body-less electronic mail message to

9   the user over the network.

1   19.   (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, further comprising means for

2   displaying the body-less electronic mail message as a line item in a

3   mailbox view and for displaying the entire temporal sequence of one or

4   more text messages while in the mailbox view.

1   20.   (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, further comprising means for

2   displaying the body-less electronic mail message as a line item in a

3   mailbox view and for horizontally scrolling through the sequence of one

4   or more text messages while in the mailbox view.

1   21.   (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, further comprising means for

2   converting the body-less electronic mail message to an online electronic

3   chat conversation.

1   22.   (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, further comprising means for

2   converting a chat conversation into a body-less electronic mail message.

1   23.   (currently amended) A computer program product for use with a

2   computer system, the computer program product comprising a computer

3   useable medium having embodied therein program code comprising:

4   program code for providing a body-less electronic mail message

5   having a header_and lacking a message body capable of receiving

6   message content;

7   program code for recording a temporal sequence of one or more

8   text messages into the header of the body-less electronic mail message;

9   and

10   program code for transmitting the body-less electronic mail

11   message to ~~the~~ a user over ~~the~~ a network.

1   24.   (Original) The computer program product of claim 23, further

2   comprising program code for displaying the body-less electronic mail

3   message as a line item in a mailbox view and for displaying the entire

4   temporal sequence of one or more text messages while in the mailbox

5   view.

1   25.   (Original) The computer program product of claim 23, further

2   comprising program code for displaying the body-less electronic mail

3   message as a line item in a mailbox view and for horizontally scrolling

4   through the sequence of one or more text messages while in the mailbox

5   view.

1   26.-32. (cancelled)